

**Predicting Immigration Attitudes from Social
Dominance and Prosocial Orientations:
The Moderating Role of Immigrants' Social Status**

By

Hyun Hannah Nam
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Abstract

Immigration attitudes have been demonstrated to be more negative among individuals who are higher in social dominance orientation (SDO), perhaps because SDO entails perceptions of zero-sum competition. Additionally, evolutionary social psychology has posited that prosocial behavior favors kinship and reciprocity, which may exclude immigrants from consideration by the native citizens of a country. This research examined how SDO and prosocial orientation predict immigration attitudes, taking into consideration the social status or national origin of immigrants. It was hypothesized that higher SDO would be associated with more negative immigration attitudes when participants are primed with migrant remittances to a low-status country (Mexico), but not a high-status country (Canada). On the other hand, higher prosocial orientation was expected to be linked to positive attitudes when primed with a high-status, but not a low-status, immigrant group. In general, the results were consistent with the hypotheses. These results suggest that the desire to maintain social hierarchy, as well as the bias toward helping those who are able to reciprocate, leads to negative immigration attitudes when immigrants are perceived to be low-status. Implications for how attitudes might be changed through reshaping perceptions and directions for future study are discussed.

The issue of international migration is now increasingly in the forefront of national and international consciousness and agendas. Migration has been an integral part of human history from its beginnings, even shaping the course of the human narrative in major ways (UNFPA, 2006). Such long-term international relocation plays a vital role in the molding of the populations, economies, and social structures of countries, making it one of the most highly charged sociopolitical issues today. In the past half-century the number of people who live outside their countries of birth has doubled, and in 2005 they numbered 191 million, representing 3% of the world's population (United Nations, 2006).¹ In 2005, the United States received the highest proportion, at 20%, of the world's international migrants (UNFPA, 2006). Immigrants in the United States that year numbered over 38 million, making up 12.9% of the population (United Nations, 2006). The United States was founded upon an immigrant population, and the American rhetoric has always greatly emphasized its status as a country of immigrants. Indeed, as President John F. Kennedy (1964) aptly stated, "The wisest Americans have always understood the significance of the immigrant." In light of immigration's social and political salience, it is important to understand people's attitudes toward immigrants and immigration and what factors are associated with the formation of these attitudes. This research explores people's attitudes toward immigrants and immigration in the context of social dominance orientation (SDO), prosocial orientation, and immigrants' country of origin.

Attitudes toward immigrants and immigration have shaped the immigrant population throughout the United States' history. Until 1875, immigration to the

¹ Such figures exclude an unknown number of undocumented migrants, who may or may not be counted in official data.

United States was essentially unrestricted as a result of the open-door policy set by Executive order of President George Washington (DeLaet, 2000). It was with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 that immigrants from a particular area of the world were first targeted; the act prevented Chinese immigrants from obtaining citizenship. Opposition to the Chinese immigrant population was based on concerns of economic and cultural threat, as well as racial stereotypes and prejudice. These restrictions lasted for over 60 years and were not lifted until 1943 (DeLaet, 2000; Xie & Goyette, 2004). With a sharp rise in immigration in the early part of the 20th century, public anti-immigration sentiment rose also. Subsequent immigration legislation was largely based on such anti-immigration views, such as the Quota Law of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924. These laws established quotas on immigration for the first time in the country's history, and tightened the quotas while altering the selection criteria, respectively. The intended consequence of these laws was realized, with a sharp reduction in overall immigration and a shift in the ethnic balance of immigrants back toward those from northern Europe. It was not until the Immigration Act of 1965 that quotas based on national origin and racial criteria were eliminated. Since then, the flow of immigration into the United States has steadily risen (continually shaped by numerous governmental policies and legislative acts), and today immigration rates are higher than ever (Deaux, 2006).

Currently, U.S. immigration policy is governed by five encompassing goals: family unification, increasing U.S. productivity and standard of living, promoting diversity, promoting human rights, and preventing illegal immigration. In essence, the legal immigration policy is primarily concerned with family unification and meeting

the needs of the labor market, so much of the immigrant population in the United States has moved with these motivations (Fix & Passel, 1994). Globally, a significant number of migrants relocate in search of better socioeconomic opportunities, and for this reason much migration occurs from the less developed regions to the more developed regions of the world. The United States, in line with its governmental policy, receives a vast proportion of such immigrants.

It has been shown that the potential benefits of immigration not only apply to the individual immigrant, but to the sending and receiving nations as well (e.g., Stephan, Renfro, Esses, Stephan, & Martin, 2005). Immigrants themselves gain from the social and economic opportunities in the receiving nations (Isbister, 1996). Moreover, they not only add diversity and enrich the culture of their new countries, but also make positive contributions to the receiving nations' economies. In the United States, for example, immigrants contribute substantially to the economy by creating more jobs than they themselves occupy (by starting new businesses), and through their expenditures on U.S. goods and services (Fix & Passel, 1994). It has also been found that despite the fact that immigrants account for over a tenth of the U.S. population, they only consume 7.9% of the country's total health care expenditure and 8% of government health care funds (Mohanty et al, 2005). In 2001, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency also reported that immigration contributes to overall growth, greater productivity, and higher employment for both immigrants and native citizens alike.

Furthermore, remittances, which are the immigrant earnings that are sent to their countries of origin, are an important way in which the sending countries benefit

from migration. Although immigrant remittances are not a new phenomenon, due to the worldwide advances in rapid transportation and mass communication, immigrants in the 21st century are able to maintain substantially stronger ties to their countries of origin than in the past. In this way, migration has the potential for playing a critical role in development and poverty reduction in many less-developed countries through remittances. The World Bank estimated that the formally transferred remittances made by immigrants worldwide in 2005 to be over US \$232 billion, of which less-developed countries received US \$167 billion. However, the actual amount of remittances is thought to be substantially higher, since this estimate does not encompass funds transferred through non-formal channels. In the United States, immigrant remittances in 2004 were estimated to be over US \$3 billion, which comprised less than 0.1% of the country's GDP (United Nations, 2006). Immigrant remittances are second only to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as a source of external funding for less-developed countries, and are much larger than the value of Official Development Assistance (ODA). They also tend to be a more predictable and stable source of income than either FDI or ODA, and for some small countries, they comprise a large share of the GDP (UNFPA, 2006). It is thus clear that immigration can be beneficial overall to all of the parties involved.

However, despite these advantages of immigration, attitudes toward immigrants and immigration are not always positive; on the contrary, negative attitudes toward immigrants and immigration are much more prevalent and difficult to change (e.g., Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001; Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998). For instance, Espenshade and Hempstead (1995) found that in a

survey of approximately 1,500 Americans, a mere 6% thought that the current level of immigration should increase. The negative attitudes toward immigrants and immigration arise largely from predominant perceptions that immigrants threaten the national identity, political power, and economic wellbeing of the members of the receiving countries (e.g., Piontkowski, Rohman, & Florack, 2002; Pratto & Lemieux, 2001; Stephan et al., 2005).

Perceptions of Threat

Much research has shown that perceptions of symbolic and realistic threat can lead to unfavorable attitudes toward immigrants and immigration (e.g., Dovidio & Esses, 2001; Jackson & Esses, 2000; Rohmann, Florack, Piontkowski, 2006; Zagefka, Brown, Broquard, & Martin, 2007). Symbolic threat concerns actual or perceived disparities between members of the receiving country and immigrants on morals, values, beliefs, and culture (Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa, 1998). Rokeach et al. (1960) found that when participants held the assumption that the beliefs of outgroup members differ from those of the ingroup, they were more likely to also be prejudiced against the outgroup. Similarly, perceived mismatch of values are associated with antagonism toward the outgroup (e.g., Schwartz & Struch, 1989), and higher levels of perceived threat (e.g., Piontkowski, Rohmann, & Florack, 2002). Furthermore, perception of greater threat to worldviews is related to expression of more negative attitudes toward immigrants (e.g., Stephan, Ybarra, & Bachman, 1999).

Realistic threat involves perceptions of threat to the welfare and political and economic power of the ingroup (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Esses et al. (2001) found

that participants who learned of immigrants' successes in a difficult economic climate held less favorable attitudes toward both the immigrants and further immigration into the country. In another study, Jackson and Esses (2000) found that participants who perceived greater economic threat from immigrants were less likely to endorse empowerment of immigrants (although they were willing to endorse direct assistance to immigrants).

Although much research has found more negative immigration attitudes in relation to prejudice and group bias toward specific immigrant nationalities (e.g., Lee & Ottati, 2002; Short, 2004; Short & Magaña, 2002), little research has been done on the kinds of threats that are presented by specific immigrant groups representing different countries. Nonetheless, regardless of country of origin, immigrants who are perceived to pose both symbolic and realistic threat are perceived to pose an even greater threat (Stephan et al., 2005). Stephan et al. (2005) found that respondents' immigration attitudes were even more negative when faced with the perception that immigrants pose both symbolic and realistic threats than either threat alone. Furthermore, perceptions of threat are even more likely in individuals higher in SDO, possibly due to beliefs in zero-sum competition (e.g., Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001). Belief in zero-sum competition involves the notion that the more the outgroup gains, such as in jobs, housing, and education, the less is available for the ingroup (e.g., Pratto & Lemieux, 2001). People who are higher in SDO hold worldviews that are consistent with inevitable competition between groups for resources, whether they are real or symbolic (e.g., Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, &

Malle, 1994). Thus, in accordance with perceptions of threat, SDO is associated with negative attitudes toward immigrants.

Social Dominance Orientation

Social dominance orientation involves individuals' desire to have their social groups dominate and subordinate other groups that they consider inferior (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Individuals who are themselves in dominant high-status positions tend to promote this worldview (e.g., Guimond, Dambrun, Michinov, & Duarte, 2003). People who are high in SDO may believe that group hierarchies are both inevitable and desirable, and subsequently perceive unavoidable competition between groups for resources. As a result, SDO is involved in various attitudinal measures (e.g., Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994). Some examples of higher SDO's implications with respect to attitudes are anti-Black feelings and stances against affirmative action (e.g., Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996; Whitley, 1999), as well as more unfavorable attitudes toward women (e.g., Bates & Heaven, 2001). Moreover, individuals higher in SDO have been found to harbor more unfavorable attitudes toward immigrants and immigrant-friendly policies (e.g., Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, & Armstrong, 2001; Jackson & Esses, 2000; Pratto & Lemieux, 2001). Such findings suggest that the desire of individuals higher in SDO to maintain intergroup inequality and their group dominance is demonstrated in their more unfavorable immigration attitudes.

Because SDO is primarily concerned with the maintenance of group-based inequality and dominance, it should follow that individuals high in SDO are most comfortable with immigrants who do not attempt to break out of the constraints of hierarchy. Immigrants can do this by maintaining the hierarchical distinctions

between their group and the socially dominant group (i.e., native citizens of the receiving country), such as by retaining their own cultural traditions and values (e.g., Pratto & Lemieux, 2001). However, should immigrants attempt to assimilate into the dominant culture of the receiving country, they would in effect be blurring or even eliminating the group distinctions upon which the structure of dominance and subordination stand. Consequently, individuals of the dominant group who are high in SDO can be expected to react negatively. On a related note, Levin and Sidanius (1999) found that when respondents were primed with low-status groups, higher SDO was associated with more negative affect toward the low-status group, as well as more positive ingroup affect. Additionally, SDO has also been found to be more strongly associated with supporting segregation and exclusion than assimilation of immigrants (e.g., Bourhis & Dayan, 2004). Indeed, when faced with assimilating immigrants, higher SDO is significantly associated with decidedly negative attitudes, even willingness to persecute immigrants in order to maintain the status quo (Thomsen, Sidanius, & Green, 2007). SDO is therefore committed to the maintenance of group-based social inequality and prevention of attempts to undermine such hierarchy.

Prosocial Orientation

If SDO entails motivation to prevent the upward movement of immigrants in a social hierarchy, individuals who are high in SDO can be expected to oppose helping immigrants, which may enable more fluid immigrant social mobility. Those with social power tend to believe that they and others deserve what they get (e.g., Mikula, 1984), and in many cases, degree of helping is closely tied to attributions of

culpability (e.g., Weiner, 1980). If those in need of help are merely victims of circumstance, such as by natural disaster, they will readily find help. But if it seems that they have created their own problems, such as by laziness or immorality, then they are more likely to be seen as getting what they deserve (e.g., Skitka & Tetlock, 1993). In this way, people tend to give according to their perceptions of what those needing help deserve, and thus prosocial orientation – that is, the extent to which people endorse help for others – may not be advantageous for those seen as causing their own problems.

Another factor of determining whom and when to help may be rooted in social exchange theory, which posits that human interactions are basically transactions that endeavor to maximize one's rewards while simultaneously minimizing one's costs (e.g., Foa & Foa, 1975). If providing help for immigrants means potentially not only losing resources (from belief in zero-sum competition) but also uprooting the social hierarchy, then people higher in SDO are likely to oppose such help. Yet when it comes to individuals in need who are appealing, whose approval is perceived to be worth seeking, and who are likely to provide reciprocal benefits, people are more willing to provide help (e.g., Krebs, 1970).

In line with this notion of a minimax strategy of helping, evolutionary social psychology postulates that prosocial orientation is based on principles of kin selection and reciprocity. According to evolutionary social psychology, the main goal in life is gene selection, and genes that induce individuals to act in the interest of strangers at cost to themselves would not survive in evolutionary competition (e.g., Buss, 1999). Thus, in order to boost the survival of one's genes, individuals are evolutionarily

biased to help according to kin selection. Similarly, people are biologically biased to help others who are similar and near to them (e.g., Burnstein, Crandall, & Kitayama, 1994; Form & Nosow, 1958). Furthermore, some evolutionary psychology research indicates that kin selection leads to ethnic ingroup favoritism (e.g., Rushton, 1991).

Genetic self-interest also implies reciprocity in helping: people help one another because they expect to receive help in return (e.g., Axelrod & Hamilton, 1981; Trivers, 1971). However, reciprocity entails that both parties are willing and able to help each other. The problem of cheating – that is, failure to reciprocate help – is instrumental in determining whom to help. In this way, social status, which can indicate economic and political capability as well as cultural values, may be a determinant of helping. When it comes to the socially dominant members of the receiving country, they may be more favorable toward helping those they perceive to be similar to them over those they view as economically and culturally inferior (such as immigrants). Moreover, in the presence of perceived competition with immigrants, a reciprocally helping relationship does not exist, and therefore people are unfavorable towards helping immigrants. For example, Jackson and Esses (2000) found that perception of economic competition caused reduced support for empowering forms of help for immigrants, which would presumably make them more economically competitive. Helping is thus shown to be targeted toward those who are similar and close to us in a reciprocal relationship, and not toward those who are perceived to be inferior in reciprocal capability.

The Present Study

The present research investigates how attitudes of native U.S. citizens toward immigrants and immigration can be predicted from SDO, prosocial orientation, and immigrants' country of origin. This is considered to be an important issue because SDO has been linked not only to negative attitudes toward various social groups, including immigrants (e.g., Esses et al. 2001), but also to unwillingness to endorse help for immigrants (e.g., Jackson & Esses, 2000). Furthermore, helping has been found to be a selective and reciprocal process that may exclude certain immigrants from receiving help (e.g., Burnstein, Crandall, & Kitayama, 1994; Trivers, 1971). This may mean that the perception of potential help for immigrants can lead to more negative immigration attitudes. Finally, immigrant country of origin (or ethnic roots) has been implicated in negative immigration attitudes (e.g., Short & Magaña, 2002; see also Levin, Federico, Sidanius, & Rabinowitz, 2002). While there is an abundance of literature connecting SDO and immigration attitudes, and even some on SDO, immigration attitudes and immigrant country of origin, there is a lack of literature that considers the relationship of SDO, helping, and immigrant country of origin with immigration attitudes. This study contributes to the existing literature by examining the specific interactions of SDO and prosocial orientation with immigrant country of origin and their relationship with attitudes toward immigrants and immigration.

Mexico and Canada were chosen as targeted immigrant countries of origin for the purposes of our study. These two countries were chosen because in pretest data, respondents indicated that Mexico and Canada were among the countries perceived by Americans as the most disliked and feared, as well as the most liked and revered,

respectively. Thus, Mexican immigrants could be identified as a low-status immigrant group and Canadian immigrants a high-status immigrant group. Additionally, Mexico and Canada, as the two countries that border the United States, both have significant, albeit distinct, relationships with the United States: Canada is seen as symbolically and realistically similar to the United States, whereas Mexico is viewed as dissimilar to the United States in those respects. Consequently, immigrants from these two countries were expected to be perceived differently and have contrasting effects on overall immigration attitudes. In the different experimental conditions, participants were primed with immigrants from Mexico or Canada who were reported to be sending remittances to their home countries. The connections between SDO, prosocial orientation, and immigration attitudes within the two groups were then contrasted with those of a control group, in which participants were primed with immigrants in general with no specified country of origin.

Although much of the literature discusses immigration attitudes as a unified measure of attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, it is important to note the distinction between attitudes toward immigrants and attitudes toward immigration. Attitudes toward immigrants concern feelings and opinions about the immigrant population itself and the individuals who comprise it. On the other hand, attitudes toward immigration refer to views of governmental policy on immigration. Because immigrants are individuals who are already in the receiving country, they may be perceived as contributing to the economy, unlikely to leave, and possibly even already part of the ingroup, which limits the extent to which attitudes toward them can be negative. On the other hand, immigration invokes the potential for opening the

door to greater numbers of immigrants “invading” the country. Because people can perceive policy as a way through which they can wield control over shaping the immigrant population, immigration may elicit more opposition than just immigrants themselves. For this reason, one might expect a somewhat higher degree of negativity in attitudes toward immigration than toward immigrants in this study.

It was predicted that when participants are primed with immigrants from a low-status country (Mexican), higher SDO would be associated with more unfavorable immigration attitudes (with a greater effect on attitudes toward immigration than toward immigrants), but not when primed with immigrants from a high-status country (Canadian). Immigration attitudes in the control condition were expected to be between the Mexican and Canadian conditions. Such an outcome would be consistent with high SDO being associated with more unfavorable attitudes toward low-status outgroups and motivation to maintain intergroup inequalities (see Levin & Sidanius, 1999). Furthermore, such a drive to maintain social hierarchy entails opposition to the upward social mobility of low-status outgroups, which can make them more threatening to the ingroup. Thus, it can be expected that when immigrant remittances are seen to be benefiting low-status countries (such as Mexico) and taking away resources from the receiving country, high SDO will forecast more negative immigration attitudes. In contrast, social dominance is unconcerned with dominating groups of high status, so when it is believed that remittances are being sent to high-status countries (such as Canada), SDO should have no effect on subsequent immigration attitudes.

A further prediction was that when primed with immigrants from a low-status country (Mexican), prosocial orientation would be associated with more unfavorable immigration attitudes, but when primed with a high-status country (Canadian), prosocial orientation would be associated with more favorable immigration attitudes (again with a possibly greater effect on attitudes toward immigration than towards immigrants). Control attitudes were also expected to be between that of the two immigrant countries. This prediction is in line with the notion that remittances benefiting a low-status country like Mexico would face opposition expressed as more negative immigration attitudes. After all, help for the symbolically and realistically disparate Mexico could lead to greater threat due to boosted social status. On the other hand, remittance benefits to high-status Canada presumably would not make it a more threatening presence to the United States because the country is already viewed as realistically and symbolically similar to the United States. In other words, the perceived social status of the immigrants' sending country should be critical in predicting immigration attitudes in the context of SDO and prosocial orientation.

Method

Participants

Seventy-three undergraduates (36 men and 37 women) enrolled in an introductory psychology course at Wesleyan University participated in this study for partial credit. Their ages ranged from 18 to 24 years with a mean age of 19.11 years. All participants were born in the United States; three additional participants who were born outside the United States and four participants whose survey responses were

incomplete were excluded from the analysis. The ethnic or racial composition of the sample, based on self-classification, was as follows: 59 were White or Caucasian, five were Asian or Pacific Islander, one was Native American or American Indian, six were Biracial, and one was “Other.”

Measures and Procedure

Participants signed up to take part in a study on social attitudes. When they arrived at the lab in groups of one to four, they were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: Mexican immigrant, Canadian immigrant, or generic immigrant (control).

Initial Attitudes Toward Immigrants. After reading and signing an informed consent form, participants were asked to indicate their attitudes toward immigrants as well as nine other filler social groups (Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993). They provided any number on a thermometer-like scale from 0° to 100° that corresponded with the degree of favorability of their attitudes, with 0° indicating extremely unfavorable attitudes, and 100° indicating extremely favorable attitudes. Every 10° were labeled to indicate different levels of favorability, and the midpoint (50°) was labeled “neither favorable nor unfavorable.” The mean attitude score of participants’ initial attitudes toward immigrants was 60.42 ($SD = 18.98$), indicating “slightly favorable” attitudes, and their scores ranged from 15 to 100. Previous research has shown that the thermometer measure of attitudes is both reliable and valid (e.g., Haddock, Zanna, & Esses, 1993; Stangor, Sullivan, & Ford, 1991).

Prosocial Orientation. Participants completed a 10-item scale that measured the degree to which they endorsed help for others. Six of the items focused on help

for other countries (e.g., “It is our duty to provide socioeconomic aid to developing countries to mitigate their suffering”), while the other four measured more general endorsement of help (e.g., “We don’t have any obligation to help others in need;” reverse scored). Due to a strong correlation of 0.63 between these two categories of items, all 10 items were combined in the analysis. Half of the items were worded in the pro-trait direction (e.g., “We owe it to ourselves to be generous to those who require help”), and the other half were worded in the con-trait direction (e.g., “Every country’s fiscal problems are uniquely its own and other nations should not be burdened by those crises”). Participants’ responses were measured on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The con-trait items were reverse-coded, and possible scores could range from 1 to 7, with higher scores indicating greater willingness to sanction help. The mean prosocial orientation score for the present sample was 5.44 ($SD = .90$), ranging from 2.90 to 7.00 (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$).

SDO. Participants completed Pratto et al.’s (1994) SDO scale, which consists of 16 items that measure the extent to which people are motivated to have their group be dominant over other social groups and endorse group-based social inequality. This scale has demonstrated high construct validity across various circumstances and cultures, including the United States, the People’s Republic of China, Canada, New Zealand, and Taiwan (e.g., Pratto et al., 2000; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994). Half of the items were worded in the pro-trait direction (e.g., “Inferior groups should stay in their place”), and the other half were worded in the con-trait direction (e.g., “We must increase social equality”). Participants’ responses to these statements were measured on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*),

and with the con-trait items reverse-coded, possible scores could span from 1 to 7. Higher scores indicated higher SDO. The mean SDO score for this sample was 2.71 ($SD = .93$), ranging from 1.00 to 4.88 ($\alpha = .91$). These scores closely follow those of other studies (e.g., Pratto & Shih, 2000).

Experimental manipulation. Participants were presented with an article from the Inter-American Development Bank on immigrant remittances from the United States to immigrants' home countries. Participants assigned to the Mexican condition read about Mexican immigrant remittances, those in the Canadian condition read about Canadian immigrant remittances, and those in the generic condition read an article about immigrant remittances in which no country of origin was specified. The same article containing the same information and statistics was used for all three conditions, and only differed from each other in the specified immigrant countries of origin. In the article, remittances made by immigrant professionals were discussed, and the positive contributions of immigrants to the US were emphasized. After reading the article, participants answered some questions about the article, to ensure that they had paid attention to what they had read.

Attitudes toward immigrants and immigration questionnaire. Following the experimental manipulation, participants responded to a 30-item questionnaire that included statements about immigrants and immigration as well as homemakers and homeless people. Seven of these items assessed immigrant attitudes (e.g., "Immigrants contribute more to our society than we give them credit for") and another seven assessed immigration or policy attitudes (e.g., "The United States can receive more immigrants than it currently admits into the country"). Half of these

items were worded in the pro-trait direction (e.g., “Legally admitted immigrants who can’t find jobs should be sent back to their countries”), and the other half were worded in the con-trait direction (e.g., “The United States needs to relax its immigration requirements”). These items were taken from Danso, Sedlovskaya, and Suanda (2007), as adapted from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research’s Eurobarometer 53 (Hartung, 2000). Participants’ responses to these statements were measured on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), and with con-trait items reverse-coded, scores on this measure could range from 1 to 7. Higher scores indicated more unfavorable attitudes. The mean immigrant attitudes score for the present sample was 2.71 ($SD = .86$), ranging from 1.00 to 4.57 ($\alpha = .80$). The mean immigration attitudes score for the present sample was 2.99 ($SD = 1.07$), ranging from 1.00 to 5.71 ($\alpha = .85$).

Participant information and debriefing. At the end, participants responded to questions about their demographic information (i.e., age, gender, racial or ethnic background, and class year). They were also asked to rate their overall attitudes toward immigrants (as well as homeless people and homemakers) on a scale of 1 (*extremely unfavorable*) to 9 (*extremely favorable*), and to indicate whether or not they had a parent who was born outside the United States. Finally, they were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Results

Preliminary Results

SDO scores. As expected with random assignment, a one-way analysis of variance showed that SDO scores did not differ among participants in the control condition ($M = 2.49$, $SD = 1.05$), the Mexican condition ($M = 2.71$, $SD = .85$), and the Canadian condition ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .87$), $F = 1.31$, *ns*.

Prosocial Orientation scores. Similarly, a one-way analysis of variance showed that prosocial orientation scores did not differ among participants in the control condition ($M = 5.60$, $SD = .81$), the Mexican condition ($M = 5.48$, $SD = .77$), and the Canadian condition ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.07$), $F = 1.00$, *ns*.

Initial Attitudes toward Immigrants

To determine if initial attitudes did not differ as a function of the experimental condition, initial attitudes toward immigrants were regressed on SDO (entered as a continuous variable, centered), prosocial orientation (entered as a continuous variable, centered), experimental condition, and the multiplicative interaction terms among the variables. Because there were three different experimental conditions, the conditions were effect-coded with two vertices; that is, two dummy variables were created, labeled as the Mexican and Canadian conditions with the control condition embedded within these two new variables. The new Mexican variable represented the contrast between the control condition and the Mexican condition (coded -1 = control, 0 = Mexican, 1 = Canadian). Likewise, the new Canadian variable represented the contrast between the control condition and the Canadian condition (coded -1 = control, 0 = Canadian, 1 = Mexican).

As one might expect, only SDO was marginally significantly associated with initial attitudes, $\beta = -.25$, $t(68) = -1.95$, $p = .06$. In other words, the higher the participants scored on SDO, the less favorably they thought of immigrants before any experimental manipulation. Initial attitudes did not differ significantly according to prosocial orientation scores, $\beta = .22$, $t(68) = 1.73$, *ns*. Furthermore, as expected with random assignment, there was no effect for experimental condition: Mexican, $\beta = -.19$, $t(68) = -1.51$, *ns*, and Canadian, $\beta = .17$, $t(68) = 1.41$, *ns*. Thus, conditions were demonstrated to be similar before the experimental manipulation.

Attitudes toward Immigrants

To test the hypotheses, a multiple regression analysis was run predicting attitudes toward immigrants from SDO, prosocial orientation, experimental condition, and the multiplicative interaction terms among each of the variables. Results revealed that higher SDO was related to more negative attitudes toward immigrants, $\beta = .25$, $t(62) = 2.59$, $p < .05$. Also, higher prosocial orientation was related to more positive attitudes toward immigrants, $\beta = -.22$, $t(62) = -2.28$, $p < .05$. No significant interaction was found among the variables, namely between SDO and experimental condition or between prosocial orientation and experimental condition. Because specific hypotheses were generated regarding how social dominance orientation and prosocial orientation might be related to attitudes toward immigrants within the various experimental conditions, further analyses were conducted to test these predictions.

In these further analyses, separate analyses were carried out within each condition to determine the significance of the relational slopes for social dominance

and prosocial orientations. That is, each different condition was examined to understand the relationship between SDO, as well as prosocial orientation, and attitudes toward immigrants. Thus, in this case, the condition labels signify the actual experimental conditions. Consistent with expectations, these analyses revealed that higher SDO scores were associated with more negative attitudes in the Mexican prime condition, $\beta = .42$, $t(20) = 2.68$, $p < .05$, but not in either the control condition, $\beta = .27$, $t(20) = 1.62$, *ns*, or Canadian condition, $\beta = .09$, $t(21) = .53$, *ns* (see Figure 1). However, the results also showed that higher prosocial orientation was associated with more positive attitudes toward immigrants in the Canadian condition, $\beta = -.41$, $t(21) = -2.54$, $p < .05$, but not in the control condition, $\beta = -.19$, $t(20) = -1.10$, *ns*, or in the Mexican condition, $\beta = -.08$, $t(20) = -.48$, *ns* (see Figure 2).

Attitudes toward Immigration

Next, scores of attitudes toward immigration were regressed on SDO, prosocial orientation, experimental condition, and the interaction terms among the variables. Results showed that higher SDO scores were related to more negative immigration attitudes, $\beta = .34$, $t(62) = 3.45$, $p < .01$. This effect was qualified by a significant interaction between SDO and experimental condition: Mexican, $\beta = .25$, $t(62) = 2.27$, $p < .05$, Canadian, $\beta = -.31$, $t(62) = -2.64$, $p < .05$. In contrast, prosocial orientation was not related to immigration attitudes, $\beta = -.13$, $t(62) = -1.36$, *ns*. However, the results also revealed a significant interaction between prosocial orientation and experimental condition: Mexican, $\beta = .30$, $t(62) = 3.06$, $p < .01$, Canadian, $\beta = -.34$, $t(62) = -2.90$, $p < .01$.

In order to understand the nature of the interactions between SDO and experimental condition as well as between prosocial orientation and experimental condition, simple slope analyses were run on each of the experimental conditions. These results revealed that higher SDO was significantly related to negative immigration attitudes in the Mexican condition, $\beta = .63$, $t(20) = 4.69$, $p < .001$, and the control condition, $\beta = .48$, $t(20) = 2.91$, $p < .01$, but not in the Canadian condition, $\beta = -.02$, $t(21) = -.10$, *ns* (see Figure 3). Prosocial orientation was shown to be significantly related to immigration attitudes in the Canadian condition, $\beta = -.58$, $t(21) = -3.35$, $p < .01$, as well as in the Mexican condition, $\beta = .35$, $t(20) = 2.45$, $p < .05$, but in opposite directions. That is, higher prosocial orientation in the Canadian condition was associated with more positive immigration attitudes, but in the Mexican condition it was associated with more negative immigration attitudes. Prosocial orientation was not significantly related to immigration attitudes in the control condition, $\beta = -.18$, $t(20) = -1.07$, *ns* (see Figure 4).

Discussion

This study explored the conditions that affect immigration attitudes. Specifically, it examined the associations of SDO and prosocial orientation with attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, taking into account the country of origin of immigrants. It was hypothesized that higher SDO would be associated with more negative attitudes when participants are primed with a low-status group, but not when they are primed with a high-status group. The second proposition was that higher prosocial orientation would be associated with more positive attitudes in the

high-status condition, but not in the low-status condition. In line with these expectations, it was found that higher SDO was linked to more negative attitudes toward immigrants in the Mexican prime condition (low-status group), but not in the Canadian prime (high-status group) or control conditions. With respect to attitudes toward immigration, the effect was more pronounced, with higher SDO being associated with more negative attitudes in both the Mexican and control conditions, but not in the Canadian condition. Similarly, the results showed that higher prosocial orientation was associated with more positive attitudes toward immigrants in the Canadian condition, but not in the Mexican or control conditions. Again, the effect was more striking with respect to attitudes toward immigration, with higher prosocial orientation predicting not only more positive attitudes in the Canadian condition, but also more negative attitudes in the Mexican condition (and no significant association in the control condition).

These findings demonstrate that the perception of immigrants as a low-status population may lead higher social dominance oriented individuals to show negative attitudes toward them and support policies that restrict their admittance into the country. Even for those who appear to have higher prosocial orientation, such perceptions of immigrants as a low-status group may trigger negative sentiments, perhaps because of just-world and system justification beliefs (see Kay, Jost, Mandisodza, Sherman, Petrocelli, & Johnson, 2007), which entail viewing the status quo as fair, legitimate, and desirable, meaning that people have what they deserve. On the other hand, perceptions of immigrants as coming from a high-status country did not trigger need for dominance. Indeed, not only was higher social dominance

unrelated to immigration attitudes, but greater prosocial orientation also predicted more positive immigration attitudes. It is thus proposed that the perception of immigrants as a distinct, low-status population triggers the desire in individuals with higher SDO to enforce social group hierarchy and have their group dominate others, which can be seen in more negative immigration attitudes (see Levin & Sidanius, 1999). This is consistent with research that shows SDO is manifest in people's inclination for the maintenance of status and power disparities between salient social groups (see Pratto et al., 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Given this, people who are high in SDO can demonstrate this desire in various ways, whether it be supporting policies that disadvantage immigrants, holding negative attitudes toward immigrants, or opposing immigration policies that may allow greater numbers of immigrants to enter the country. Mexico is not only largely perceived as a low-status country economically, but it is also perceived as having a distinct culture from the United States and is thus realistically and symbolically different from, and threatening to, native U.S. citizens.

The perception that immigrant remittances were benefiting the Mexican economy may have also contributed to more negative attitudes. Because remittances can help to dissolve group boundaries by providing a means for low-status countries to move up in the social hierarchy, they not only increase the perceived threat from a low-status country, but they can also trigger the social dominance oriented need to prevent the social ascension of the low-status group. Previous research has found that high SDO is connected to opposition to empowering forms of help for immigrants (Jackson & Esses, 2000), and remittances to low-status countries can be seen as

empowering and mobilizing. This desire to maintain the social hierarchy is evident in the more negative immigration attitudes of participants in the Mexican prime condition.

In contrast, the perception of immigrants as a similar, high-status population does not provoke any need to dominate in individuals with higher SDO. In a sense, a high-status outgroup that is similar to the ingroup in many ways appears to be considered essentially as a part of the ingroup in terms of social hierarchy. When immigrants are viewed as part of the ingroup's coalition, sharing common ethnic and national roots, the prejudice of high-SDO individuals is reduced (Esses, Dovidio, Jackson & Armstrong, 2001). Canada may already be perceived as very similar to the United States, realistically and symbolically: Canada is an economically wealthy country that shares many cultural characteristics and even some ethnic origins with the United States. For this reason, high SDO has no effect on immigration attitudes when immigrants are regarded as high-status. Likewise, believing that immigrant remittances are being sent to Canada may not contribute to any perception of dissolution of group boundaries, for any status boundaries between Canada and the United States are likely seen as insubstantial. Therefore, perception of remittances to Canada does not lead to greater threat posed by Canada, nor does it lead to subsequently more negative immigration attitudes.

Furthermore, perceptions of immigrants as a high-status group (similar to members of the receiving nation) lead to expression of more positive immigration attitudes, especially among those higher in prosocial orientation. Perhaps the belief that immigrants from high-status countries are not only culturally similar to members

of the receiving nation, but also capable of reciprocating help makes them an attractive addition to the country. These results further support findings that helping could be seen as a social exchange determined by reciprocal capacity (see Buss, 1999; Trivers, 1971) that favors those similar and close to us (see Burnstein, Crandall, & Kitayama, 1994). On the other hand, the reciprocity theory also supports the possibility that the perception of immigrants as a low-status group who cannot reciprocate help may repel people who are higher in prosocial orientation from wanting to help immigrants (perhaps in the form of remittances), which is revealed in more negative immigration attitudes. The mechanisms of prosocial orientation appear to work in line with SDO in that they both serve to maintain the social hierarchy through disadvantaging low-status immigrants.

The findings further demonstrate a more conspicuous effect of SDO and prosocial orientation when it comes to attitudes toward immigration than toward immigrants. Specifically, whereas attitudes toward immigrants were only predicted by higher SDO in the Mexican condition, higher SDO predicted more negative attitudes toward immigration in both the Mexican and control conditions. This suggests that when participants were not primed with a specific country of origin, they may have assumed that “immigrant” is equivalent to “Mexican immigrant” – that is, “immigrant” simply means a low-status group that must be dominated and prevented from further entering the country. Moreover, higher prosocial orientation only predicted more positive attitudes toward immigrants in the Canadian condition, but when it came to attitudes toward immigration, the measure also clearly predicted more negative attitudes in the Mexican condition (in contrast with more positive

attitudes in the Canadian condition and no effect in the control condition). This indicates that when immigrants are believed to be coming from a low-status country, despite their positive contributions to the receiving nation, native citizens' high willingness to endorse help does not benefit them and they are still seen as an immigrant group to be restricted.

This distinction in attitudes toward immigrants and immigration may exist due to different perceptions and connotations of them (see Dovidio & Esses, 2001). While attitudes toward immigrants are generally clearly negative, largely due to perceptions of threat (see Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998), there may be limits to the extent of negativity that can be expressed toward a group that is already in the country. Immigrants may be seen as contributing to both the receiving nation's society and economy and their home countries through remittances, and could even be included (if marginally) in the ingroup. Expression of negative attitudes may be further restricted by the fact that immigrants who are already in the country are unlikely to leave, and it would be exceedingly difficult to simply try to send them back to their countries of origin. In other words, people have little influence when it comes to actual immigrants already in the country. In contrast, people may believe they have more power over immigration policy, which monitors, governs, and shapes the flow of incomers and the immigrant population. With this ability to play a more considerable role in determining who gets to enter the country, people are more disposed to express their anti-immigration attitudes, which are pervasive. Some survey studies have found, for example, that over 75% of Americans would like to see immigration kept below or at the current levels (Pew Research Center, 2006).

People's attitudes may therefore be more negative when it comes to immigration than when dealing with immigrants.

These findings are important because they show that people's immigration attitudes depend greatly on their perception of immigrants as a high-status or a low-status group, and high SDO and prosocial orientation only serve to fuel these attitudes towards the maintenance of status disparities. On top of this, unless specifically focusing on immigrants from a high-status country, people generally seem to view immigrants as a low-status group, perhaps even assuming that the immigrants in question are from Mexico. As demonstrated by Bourhis & Dayan (2004), people are more favorable toward the integration of high-status, valued immigrants and the segregation and exclusion of low-status, devalued immigrants. The findings of the current study are consistent with this notion that high-status immigrants are desirable and worthy of assistance, whereas low-status immigrants should just be dominated and prevented from integrating into, or receiving benefits from, the receiving society (see Thomsen, Sidanius, & Green, 2007).

This high-low status dichotomy may be fueled by media depictions of immigrants (see Esses et al., 2001). The media is littered with negative coverage of immigrants, mostly from Mexico, and mostly illegal. Short & Magaña (2002) found, for instance, that attitudes toward immigrants were negatively affected when the media portrayed them as being of Mexican descent causing social problems. Even the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have been found to have a negative effect on the perception of Mexican immigrants. Hitlan et al. (2007) found that respondents perceived greater realistic threat from Mexican immigrants after September 11 than

before, and stronger American identity was related to higher prejudice against Mexican immigrants, which indicates that Mexicans are excluded from the American identity. Furthermore, previous research has shown that based on political and social stereotypes, legal Mexican immigrants are judged more harshly than legal Canadian immigrants (Short, 2004), and that people are more supportive of depriving Mexican immigrants than Canadian immigrants of many benefits of U.S. citizenship and even of deporting them (Lee & Ottati, 2002). But even positive portrayals of immigrants can worsen immigration attitudes, particularly when immigrants appear to threaten the interests of the receiving nation's members (Esses et al., 1998). It is in such cases that the low-status, symbolically distinct immigrants would probably suffer in treatment and attitudes.

High SDO only serves to exacerbate the negative affect toward low-status immigrants and reinforce group boundaries. Danso, Sedlovskaya, & Suanda (2007) found that participants higher in SDO who focused their attention on the similarities of their values to those of immigrants maintained more negative attitudes toward immigrants than if they simply focused on their own values. When immigrants are a distinct, low-status outgroup, SDO plays a significant role in predicting immigration attitudes, especially if it appears that they are trying to "infiltrate" the host society through assimilation (see also Thomsen, Sidanius & Green, 2007). On the other hand, Esses, Dovidio, Jackson & Armstrong (2001) found that when participants focused their attention on their shared ethnic and national roots with immigrants, high-SDO individuals displayed less prejudice. The results of the present study are consistent

with these findings, as individuals high in SDO would have no need to dominate and exclude others who are similar to them in status and background.

The implication of the finding that higher prosocial orientation predicts more negative attitudes toward low-status immigrant groups is that immigrants from low-status countries like Mexico face huge challenges in achieving upward social mobility and acceptance into the receiving culture. This study shows that willingness to help may only benefit those who are perceived to be similar to us and able to reciprocate. It is possible that Mexico is seen as low-status and culturally dissimilar to the United States, as well as unable and unwilling to reciprocate help, so people are more opposed to immigration when it is perceived as coming from Mexico than when it is perceived as coming from Canada. Future research could examine perceptions of similarity and reciprocal capacity of Mexico and Canada to the United States and the extent to which such perceptions may influence people's willingness to endorse help for immigrants and support immigration.

Further, if helping a low-status immigrant group leads to that group becoming more competitive and a greater threat to the economic and social wellbeing of the receiving country members, people will likely be against such help as well as more generally negative toward that group. For example, Jackson & Esses (2000) found that higher perceived economic competition with immigrants caused decreased support for empowering forms of help for immigrants, especially in cases of higher SDO, due to belief in zero-sum competition. After all, perception of competition yields a non-reciprocal relationship. Perhaps if Mexican immigrants were portrayed as capable of reciprocating help and not merely low-status competitors, attitudes

toward them and policies concerning immigrants could be changed. However, because there is no direct evidence for this possibility, future study is required to investigate the potential impact of different perceptions of Mexican immigrants on immigration attitudes.

Limitations

One limitation of the study is that no untreated control group was included in the experimental design, which makes it difficult to ascertain the relative attitudinal movements across the various conditions. A follow-up study with an untreated control in addition to the other experimental conditions would show the extent to which attitudes across conditions differ. However, this study provides a relevant portrait of people's general perceptions of immigrants, which is useful in comparing the Mexican and Canadian conditions.

It is also possible that due to the widespread portrayal of illegal immigrants in the media, the legality of the immigrants in the study was ambiguous, despite the article's focus on immigrant professionals. Previous research has shown that people display more negative affect toward illegal immigrants than legal immigrants (see Short, 2004). This problem could be remedied in future studies by clearly identifying the legal status of the immigrants in question. Despite the limitations, the current research clearly demonstrates the role of status in the link between SDO, as well as prosocial orientation, and immigration attitudes. First, it shows that SDO worsens only attitudes toward low-status immigrant groups. Also, low-status groups are disadvantaged even among people who appear to be higher in prosocial orientation, perhaps due to the perception that they are dissimilar and unable to reciprocate help.

Attitudes toward high-status immigrant groups are unaffected by social dominance and are more positive among those higher in prosocial orientation, presumably because of the perception that they are more similar to the receiving nation members. Finally, attitudes toward immigration are more negative than are those toward immigrants, but only when immigrants are perceived to be low-status.

Implications and Conclusions

The results of this research have relevance in the formation of governmental policy on immigration and immigrants. The more people believe that immigrants are a low-status outgroup who should neither be admitted into the country nor integrated into the society as full members, the more likely it is that immigration policy will reflect such social desires. With political and social rhetoric of immigration mainly focused on the negative qualities of immigration, such as illegal immigrants and competition for resources, it is not surprising that the public increasingly views immigrants as a problem and not as a boon to society. For example, in 2006, 52% of respondents thought that immigrants are a burden to society because they take jobs and housing, an increase from 38% in 2000. In the same fashion, only 41% of people surveyed viewed immigrants as strengthening the United States with their hard work and talents in 2006, down from 50% in 2000 (Pew Research Center, 2006). However, the same survey also found that people with greater exposure to and experience with immigrants hold more positive opinions of immigrants, which is promising for future research that may explore the role of experience in people's appraisal of immigrants as an outgroup of low-status or as part of the ingroup of high- (or similar) status. Such

further research may also examine the role of SDO and endorsement of help in people's evaluations of their experiences with immigrants.

It is already clear that Americans view Canada and Mexico differently, but it may also be useful to further investigate perceptions of these countries in terms of the symbolic and realistic threat they might pose, their cultural similarity to the United States, and their dependability for future help and cooperation. Such views are bound to affect the perception of immigrants from these countries as part of the ingroup or the outgroup. If immigrants are defined as a clearly distinct outgroup, they will be viewed more negatively, especially in light of higher SDO (see Danso et al., 2007). However, such negative attitudes can be reduced when immigrants are defined as part of the same coalition or team as the ingroup (see Esses et al., 2001). Prosocial orientation is also likely to predict less negative views of immigrants if the immigrants are seen as non-threatening members of the team. Attitudes could also conceivably be changed by emphasizing norms of social responsibility and kinship among society's members.

This research thus paints a picture not only of people's contrasting attitudes based on their perceptions of immigrants' relative social status, but also of the roles that SDO and prosocial orientation play in response to status perceptions. Both SDO and prosocial orientation are associated with immigration attitudes in ways that reveal the maintenance of social hierarchies, and as such, perceptions of status are critical in people's attitudes toward immigrants and immigration. As the media has aided in the shaping of status perceptions about immigrants, it is possible that it can likewise serve to potentially reshape people's notions of and attitudes toward immigrants. Perhaps

portraying immigrants as capable members of similar status to the ingroup who are able to participate in a reciprocal relationship could decrease the need to subordinate them, increase willingness to help them, and ameliorate overall attitudes toward immigrants and immigration.

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Figure 1. Predicted mean immigrant attitudes as a function of social dominance orientation and experimental manipulation.

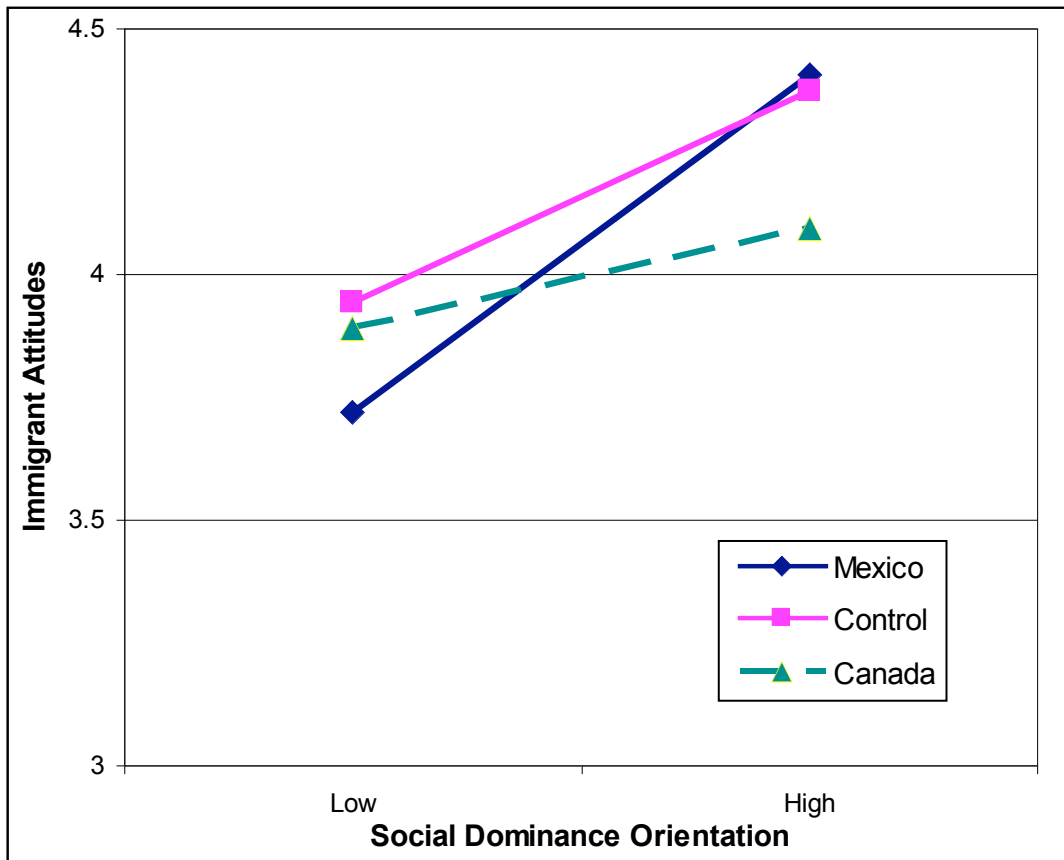


Figure 2. Predicted mean immigrant attitudes as a function of prosocial orientation and experimental manipulation.

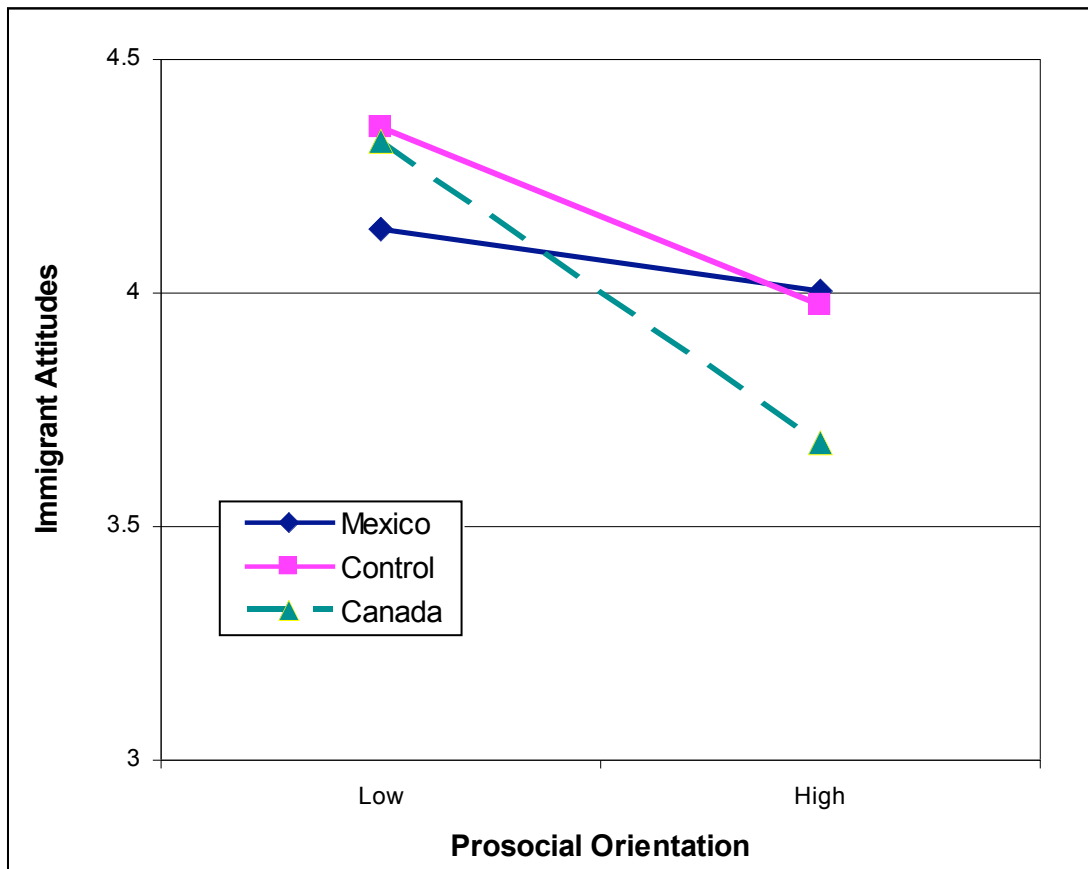


Figure 3. Predicted mean immigration attitudes as a function of social dominance orientation and experimental manipulation.

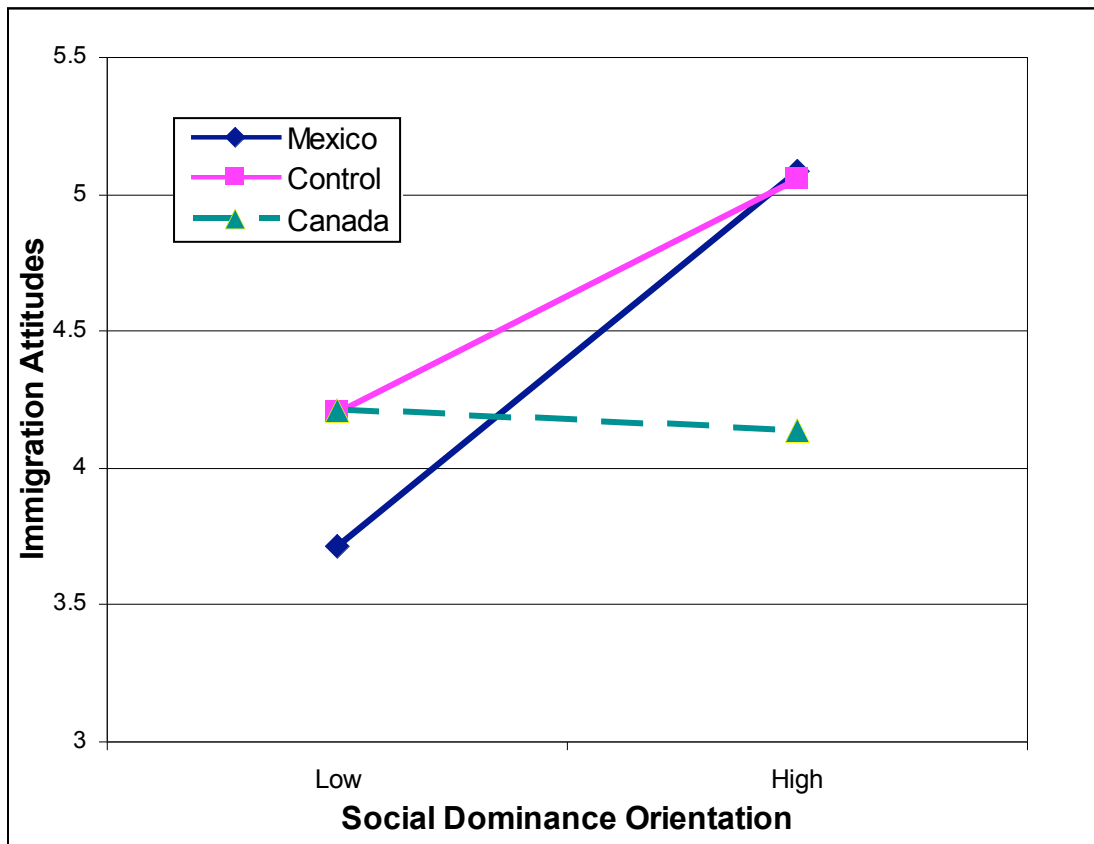
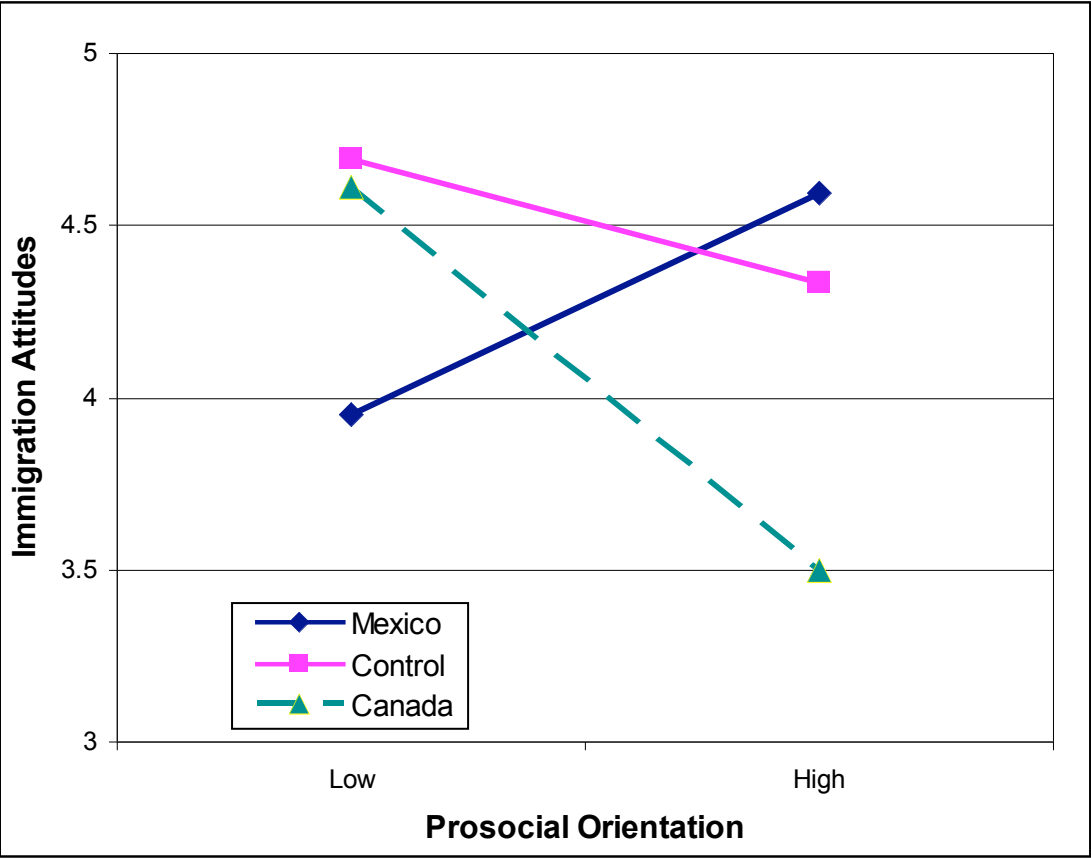


Figure 4. Predicted mean immigration attitudes as a function of prosocial orientation and experimental manipulation.



Appendix A: Prosocial Orientation Measure

1. It is the responsibility of the developed world to ensure that citizens of less developed countries enjoy high quality of life.
2. We should be just as concerned about economic hardships in other countries as in our own.
3. Every country's fiscal problems are uniquely its own and other nations should not be burdened by those crises.
4. There is no reason why we should pay any attention to the economic situation in far-off lands.
5. I do not understand the logic of misusing scarce economic resources on poor foreign countries.
6. It is our duty to provide socioeconomic aid to developing countries to mitigate their suffering.
7. We shouldn't have to share what we have with others in need.
8. We don't have any obligation to help others in need.
9. We owe it to ourselves to be generous to those who require help.
10. It is our duty to assist those who are defenseless.

Appendix B: Experimental Manipulation (Mexican Prime Condition)

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Press Release

October 18, 2006

Migrant remittances from the United States to Mexico to reach \$ 15 billion in 2006, says IDB

New study estimates 8.6 million immigrants are sending home more money more frequently



Terry, Moreno and Bendixen

Mexican migrants working in the United States legally will send around \$15 billion to their homeland this year, up from some \$12 billion in 2004, according to a report released today by the Inter-American Development Bank.

The report, which covers 48 states and the District of Columbia, is based on a survey commissioned by the IDB's Multilateral Investment Fund and conducted among 1,103 adult professionals born in Mexico and working in the United States. The money sent by migrants from the United States to Mexico represents about three quarters of the \$20 billion Mexico will receive in remittances in 2006.

At a news conference, IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno noted that while remittances continue to grow as a source of income for many nations, the survey suggests that about 80 percent of the money earned by Mexican immigrants remains in the United States, contributing to local economies.

Mexican immigrants in the United States have a total estimated income of more than \$150 billion. Some 4.1 million (6.3 percent of all adult Mexicans living here) send money home regularly, averaging about 2.0 percent of their earnings.

"The large increases in remittances from certain states also underscore the fact that members of this young foreign-born professional workforce are ready to relocate to wherever their skills are needed, giving the U.S. economy an edge of flexibility no other industrialized nation can match," said Moreno. "They are also proof of migrants' strong commitment to family and community."

Polster Sergio Bendixen, whose firm conducted the survey for the MIF, said the results indicate that Mexican migrants are not clustering around traditional communities defined by nationalities but increasingly going to wherever there are openings and their skills are needed.

When compared with a similar survey conducted in 2004, the new study illustrates the changing patterns of Mexican migration in the United States. States that have long had large Mexican populations (California, Texas, New York and Florida) still are the biggest sources of remittances to Mexico, but some of the largest increases in volume of transfers took place in other parts of the country. Georgia, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Indiana, Wisconsin, South Carolina, Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska and Iowa saw increases of more than 80 percent over the past two years.

MIF Manager Donald F. Terry observed that, given the current demographic trends in many countries, it is likely that the foreign-born population will continue to grow in the United States as native-born workers retire in greater numbers. "If the U.S. labor market is going to continue to expand, more workers will have to come from outside of the United States. That's the reality of the world today," Terry said.